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ABSTRACT

Pennsylvania State University's Department of French and Institute of Public Administration have responded to the need for language-trained civil servants by developing a dual master's degree program in French and public administration. Degree requirements include the full requirements for each program, with six credits from each curriculum considered as electives for the other. The average program length is six semesters. Graduates are expected to begin careers in state or federal public administration with an international emphasis. At the end of the program, students produce a bilingual group or individual paper equivalent to a master's thesis. The paper must be approved by faculty leaders in both units. The first program participants, each of whom came to the institution for a different program, are now completing requirements. The program has been designed entirely from existing courses, but has required more full-time specialists in language, culture, and pedagogy and has precipitated new doctoral concentrations in those nontraditional specialties. (MSE)

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A NEW CONCURRENT MASTER'S PROGRAM IN FRENCH STUDIES AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AT PENN STATE

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**A New Concurrent Master's Program
in French Studies and Public Administration
at Penn State**

It is a truism that some forty years ago the Fulbright Fellowship program inaugurated a new spirit of internationalism between American academics and their counterparts abroad. Yet, in 1979 President Carter's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies described the "scandalous" lack of expertise in matters of multi-lingual and multi-cultural competence in the United States, a deficiency of serious economic and political import. Among its findings the Commission noted the large number of vacant positions within the Federal Government with job descriptions requiring second language and second culture competency.

More recently, in the New York Times of 13 January 1987 Fred Hechinger, a member of the Carter Commission, reported a State Department paper confirming a shortage of foreign service officers who "speak languages vital to foreign policy." Almost a decade following the publication of the two volume report by the President's Commission, not to mention the Iran crisis, it is surprising that the Federal Government has yet to embark on a decisive effort to eliminate monolingualism and monoculturalism within the ranks of those with international responsibilities. The dilemma of "cultural inertia" [1] is compounded by state governments which face a continuing tide of immigrants, travelers, and business representatives from East and West, frequently without line and staff personnel who include multi-language and multi-cultural competencies in their job descriptions.

In view of the numerous federal and, to a lesser degree, state vacancies requiring an advanced knowledge of a foreign language and culture, the Department of French and the Institute of Public Administration at Penn State initiated consultations, starting in 1985, addressing the feasibility of concurrent degrees in French Studies and in Public Administration. Let me point out that at Penn State the Institute of Public Administration offers a Master's degree designed to train civil servants here and abroad. Every year a number of international civil servants, designated as Humphrey Fellows, join American students in an eighteen month Master's program. As such, the MPA degree offers a pragmatic program of study, as I shall show presently, which differs markedly from the theoretical or ideological orientation of curricula in Political Science.

In our consultations, two objectives were paramount: advanced competency in French language and culture; inclusion of a French "connection" into existing MPA requirements. In designing the dual degree program of study, my colleagues were guided by models used in the concurrent degree programs in French and Business Administration offered at Penn State since 1980. (Concurrent Master's degrees are offered in French Studies and the MBA curriculum or in French and a business specialty such as Finance, Logistics, or Marketing in an MS mode.)

After approval by the faculties of both units, we presented the concurrent MA degree curricula in French and in Public Administration to the Graduate School. We must have made a persuasive case for the proposal sailed by Graduate School Committees and Deans virtually without change right on to final approval by the President and the Board of Trustees.

In our rationale we stressed the need for civil service employees, both federal and state, with advanced skills in government administration and also in a major foreign language and world culture. As in our French/Business graduate programs, applicants must meet entrance requirements for each: viz. an undergraduate major in French, or *equivalent*, plus at least one or two undergraduate courses in Political Science, Economics, and quantification. Graduates are expected to begin careers in public administration, whether state or federal, with an international emphasis. For example, state or federal agencies with a mission to develop import-export relationships.

Credit requirements for the concurrent degrees total sixty-six: twenty-seven credits in French; thirty-nine credits in Public Administration. Because the two degrees are designated as *concurrent* or dual degrees, one degree cannot be completed without presenting all requirements for the second. Thus, the Graduate School considers six credits from each curriculum as related electives in the other. Most graduate students, especially Teaching Assistants, take three or at most four courses per semester, a pace which extends the average length of study for the program to three years/six semesters. However, summer courses can accelerate completion time. Indeed, full-time or scholarship students may complete requirements in two calendar years, including summer study.

For the French Studies component students must take six credits of advanced language, choosing among Composition, Stylistics, and Business French. They must also take twelve credits of French Culture, choosing courses on Contemporary France, Francophone Culture, History of French Civilization, and French-Canadian Language and Culture.

For the Public Administration component candidates must take twenty credits of core subjects: Doctrine and Practice, Theory, Government Personnel Management, Budgeting, Systems Management, Analysis and Measurement, Public Management Information Systems, Government Financial Management and Accounting, and ineluctably, Computer Applications. As in French, one elective is required.

A summary of courses available for each degree is provided in Table I. Let me point out that at Penn State courses numbered 500-600 are reserved for graduate students.

The end of program paper consists of either a group or individual paper. Concurrent degree candidates present a bilingual version of the paper. The production, equivalent to a Master's thesis, must be approved by faculty readers in both units.

Since the concurrent program has been in operation only since Fall 1986, the first degree candidates are now completing requirements. Let me describe each of them briefly.

The first graduate student to enroll, a Hispanic-American, was originally interested in our French/Business program. However, when she learned of the recently approved French/MPA track, she shifted immediately, because of a need for multi-lingual civil servants in her native Puerto Rico. We have recommended her for a training workshop sponsored by the United Nations in Geneva next July.

The second candidate came to the French Department as a Master's candidate from a mid-western denominational college. The possibility of combining her interest in French Studies with government service appealed to her more than a career in teaching. When she graduates this summer she will seek employment in Washington.

The third candidate, a student from Guangzhou Foreign Language Institute of the People's Republic of China, came to Penn State this year as a doctoral candidate in French. (Mainland China is encouraging doctoral training abroad with a view to developing autonomous degree programs at the same level.) Last December the Chinese student came to me with a request to transfer to the French/Business program, saying that such expertise would be as valuable in his country as a doctorate in French.

I suggested that he investigate the French/MPA program. He returned to my office a few days later saying that administrative training would be even more valuable. I agreed to the transfer on the condition that his Institute give approval. Authorization from China arrived a few days ago.

Since the French/MPA program at Penn State is only in its second year of operation, with the first graduate anticipated this summer, it is not possible to report on placement histories at this time. However, my colleagues and I feel that we have developed a graduate curriculum which is responsive to a societal need here and abroad. To our knowledge there are no other L2/MPA programs in North America. While student response has been modest (as yet, we have not advertised nationally), in the first semesters of operation, transfers from other programs feel confident that they have selected a curriculum which presupposes a satisfying career in public service.

Finally, as was the case in our undergraduate and graduate French/Business curricula, we have been able to start the new degree program in French and Public Administration with no additions to existing courses. In a short term perspective this has meant that we could simply "repackage" existing course offerings, as old wine in a new bottle, placing greater emphasis in language and culture, than we do in our conventional Master's degree which still retains a strong literature component. In a long term perspective, however, the impact on department offerings and on faculty recruiting has resulted in the appointment of more full-time specialists in language, culture, and pedagogy, a phenomenon which in turn has precipitated new doctoral "concentrations" in these nontraditional specialties. As American L2 departments turn increasingly to broad-based, cross-cultural curricula, including Business and Public Administration, the need to train doctoral students in nonliterary specialties increases.

In the Department of French at Penn State, for example, we have identified four doctoral concentrations in Civilization, Linguistics, Literature, and Pedagogy. And we have recruited francophone faculty with advanced training in Anthropology, Computation, Cultural History, and Pedagogy.

In brief, as foreign language departments develop interdisciplinary curricula in business, social studies, and now public administration, they must face the responsibility of preparing foreign language teachers who are familiar with the related subject areas. The challenge of preparing doctoral students in foreign languages who are at once humanists and vocationalists poses a new problem in higher education. But that is a subject for another paper.

Notes

[1] For an incisive summary of the cultural complacency fostered by the rise of English as a "lingua franca," see Gerald Gillespie, "American Internationalism in the year 2000," ADFL Bulletin, 18.3 (1987), p. 41.

TABLE I

Concurrent Degree Programs:
MA in French Studies/Master of Public Administration
The Pennsylvania State University

Requirements

M.A. in French Studies

Language: 2 courses (6 credits)

Fr 507	Composition (3) OR
Fr 510	Adv. Stylistics (3)
Fr 508A	Fr. Bus. Comm. (3)

Culture: 4 of 5 courses (12 credits)

Fr 530	Contemporary France (3)
Fr 531	Francophone Culture (3)
597A/B	Analysis of French Civilization (6)
Fr 597B	Fr. Canadian Lang. and culture(3)

Literature: 1 literature course (3 credits)

Electives: 6 credits in French

Total: 27 credits in French, plus 6 credits of Pub A courses), or 33 credits total.

Paper: in French and in English.

Master of Public Administration

Core Courses: all required (27 credits)

Pub A 569	Doctrine and Practice (2)
Pub A 571	Theory of Pub. A. (3)
Pub A 575	Govt. Personnel Mgmt. (3)
Pub A 576	Govt. Budgeting (3)
Pub A 577	Organization and Systems Management (3)
Pub A 579	Methods of Analysis and Measurement in Pub A (6)
Pub A 581	Public Management Information Systems (3)
Pub A 586	Government Financial Management and Acctg (3)
Pub A 597	Publ Sector Communications(1)

Electives: 6 credits in Pub A

Terminal Option: Practicum or Internship *(6)

Total: 39 credits in Pub A, plus 6 credits of French courses), or 45 credits total

*For mid-career students (three years or more of administrative experience), the practicum/internship will be waived and a three-credit final paper will be written, thereby reducing electives to 9 credits, for a total of 39 credits for the degree.

Total Program Credits = 66. Because of the sharing of 6 credits from each program (for example, Pub A 577 could count as 3 credits for the MA and 3 credits for the MPA; French 508A could count as 3 credits for the MA and 3 for the MPA, etc.), candidates for the concurrent MA/MPA will meet program requirements through satisfactory completion of 66 graduate credits.